



Governor John R. Kasich

American Red Cross
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
Ohio Citizen Corps
National Weather Service
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
Ohio Department of Education

Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Department of Mental Health
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Public Safety – Ohio EMA
Ohio Department of Transportation
Ohio Insurance Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Tamara McBride, Ohio EMA, 614-799-3695
Mitch Wilson, OII, 614-228-1593

Ohio's students in grades 1-6 encouraged to participate in 2013 Severe Weather Awareness Poster Contest

Columbus, OH – The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is looking for students in first through sixth grades, including specialized instruction classes, to participate in its annual poster contest. The purpose of the severe weather awareness poster contest is to have Ohio's youth demonstrate through illustrations of actions they can take before, during and after severe weather events to protect themselves and others.

Tornadoes, floods, thunder and lightning storms, extreme heat and snow and ice storms are weather conditions that typically affect the state.

“As educators and parents, we are committed to teach safety and preparedness practices to our students,” said Nancy Dragani, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. “Ohio has experienced extreme weather this past year: a derecho; a superstorm with hurricane force winds; winter with record-breaking high temperatures on one day and snow and bitter cold the next. This poster contest provides the perfect opportunity for students to learn about Ohio weather, and through their creativity, teach others about safety and preparedness.”

Ohio schools have until April 16 to send their first-place posters (per grade) to their regional National Weather Service offices. The NWS offices will judge all poster entries and choose their top regional winners per grade. In early May, the Severe Weather Awareness committee will judge the top regional posters to determine the state and overall state winners.

Schools will be notified of their regional winners by the end of May. All regional winners will be invited to attend the poster contest awards ceremony, which will be held at the Ohio State Fair's DiSalle's Creative Arts Center on Saturday, August 3.

The prizes are big and the day's event is fun. All regional winners and their parents will receive four entry passes for the day at the Ohio State Fair. All regional-winning students will receive a host of prizes, certificates and awards. State-level winners will receive additional prizes, and the overall state winner will receive even more prizes, along with a personalized trophy. The overall winner's school will be loaned a “traveling trophy” to display during the school year.

An ideal time for students to participate in the poster contest is during Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week, which is March 3-9. This year, the safety campaign coincides with FEMA's and NOAA's National Severe Weather Preparedness Week.

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Ohio's statewide tornado drill will be conducted on Wednesday, March 6 at 9:50 a.m. Many Ohio county emergency management offices will test their outdoor warning systems. The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness encourages schools, businesses and homes to practice their tornado safety drills during this time.

For complete rules and forms to participate in the poster contest, visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness website at: www.weathersafety.ohio.gov. Go to **Just for Kids** and click on **2013 Poster Contest Rules**.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is comprised of 14 organizations and state agencies that are dedicated in teaching Ohioans severe weather safety and preparedness.

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